

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EURE-00 SSO-00 AF-04 NSC-05

NSCE-00 INR-05 SAM-01 SP-02 L-01 DHA-02 ORM-01 CIAE-00

DODE-00 IO-03 OMB-01 PRS-01 INRE-00 /049 W

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O R 191205Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3810

INFO AMCONSUL LUANDA

S E C R E T LISBON 4711

LIMDIS

EO 11652: XGDS-3

TAGS: SREF PO US

SUBJ: U.S. ASSISTANCE FOR ANGOLAN RELIEF

1. PURSUANT TO CONVERSATIONS DURING MY RECENT WASHINGTON CONSULTATIONS, I WOULD LIKE TO RAISE DURING MY MEETING WITH PRESIDENT COSTA GOMES, (PROBABLY LATER THIS WEEK), POSSIBILITY OF U.S. ASSISTANCE BOTH FOR THE TRANSPORTATION OF PORTUGUESE REFUGEES FROM ANGOLA TO PORTUGAL AS WELL AS SUPPLIES FOR THE REFUGEES IN PORTUGAL.

2. IF THE DEPARTMENT APPROVES, I WOULD MAKE CLEAR THAT WE WOULD FAVORABLY CONSIDER U.S. ASSISTANCE IN RESPONSE TO A WRITTEN REQUEST FROM THE PRESIDENT HIMSELF.

3. SUCH ASSISTANCE COULD INVOLVE AIRLIFTING UP TO 80,000 PORTUGUESE REFUGEES (THE ESTIMATED NUMBER OF ADDITIONAL SEATS NEEDED TO TRANSPORT 300,000 SETTLERS WISHING TO BE REPATRIATED) BETWEEN NOW AND THE END OF OCTOBER. IT COULD ALSO INCLUDE THE PROVISION OF A FIELD HOSPITAL, MEDICINES, TENTS, BLANKETS, AND OTHER ITEMS FOR USE IN PORTUGAL. SINCE WE HAVE NOT CONTACTED THE GOP AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR COORDINATING REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT EFFORTS, WE CANNOT

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ESTIMATE THE MAGNITUDE OF THE NEED. I WOULD APPRECIATE A COST ESTIMATE BY THE DEPARTMENT FOR THE AIRLIFT OF

80,000 PEOPLE AND THE PROVISION OF TENTS, BLANKETS, MEDICINES,
AND A FIELD HOSPITAL FOR ABOUT 40,000 PEOPLE.

4. I RECOGNIZE THAT SEVERAL POSSIBLE OBJECTIONS MIGHT BE
RAISED TO LARGE SCALE U.S. INVOLVEMENT IN THIS EFFORT.
SOME HAVE POINTED TO THE POSSIBLE CRITICISM OF OUR
REMOVING MUCH-NEEDED WHITE TECHNICAL EXPERTISE FROM AFRICA.
IN RESPONSE TO THIS, I BELIEVE THE SITUATION HAS SO
DETERIORATED IN ANGOLA THAT IT IS HIGHLY UNLIKELY THAT MANY
WHITES WILL REMAIN UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES. I WOULD
NOTE THAT OUR AIRLIFT OF WHITES FROM THE BELGIAN CONGO
SHORTLY AFTER INDEPENDENCE DID NOT RESULT IN ANY SIGNIFICANT
AFRICAN CRITICISM. A SECOND POSSIBLE OBJECTION IS THAT SOME
MIGHT SEE THIS EFFORT AS SUPPORT FOR THE VASCO GONCALVES
GOVERNMENT. TO MINIMIZE THIS, I WOULD EMPHASIZE THAT ANY
ASSISTANCE WOULD BE A HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE TO A PERSONAL
WRITTEN REQUEST BY THE PRESIDENT. ASSISTANCE WOULD ALSO BE
GIVEN IN A WAY THAT WOULD BE INDEPENDENTLY VISIBLE, NOT
SUBMERGED IN GOP PROJECTS. AN ADDITIONAL OBJECTION HAS BEEN
THAT SUCH U.S. ASSISTANCE WOULD BAIL THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT
OUT OF ITS OWN SELF-MADE DISTRESS AND THAT IT MAY BE FAR
MORE USEFUL TO ALLOW THE ANGER OF THE REFUGEES TO TAKE ITS
TOLL IN METROPOLITAN PORTUGAL. MY JUDGMENT, HOWEVER, IS THAT
HUMANITARIAN REQUIREMENTS AND THE BENEFICIAL EFFECTS OF A
POSITIVE U.S. IDENTIFICATION WITH THIS EFFORT FAR OUTWEIGH
CONSIDERATION OF INCREASED REFUGEE HOSTILITY TOWARD THE GOP.
REGARDLESS OF WHAT ACTION THE GOP TAKES, REFUGEES WILL
CONSTITUTE A POLITICAL FORCE HOSTILE TO THE PRESENT
GOVERNMENT. VISIBLE SUPPORT FROM THE U.S. IS LIKELY TO
INCREASE THEIR ASSOCIATION WITH THE MODERATE PRO-WESTERN CAUSE,
WITHOUT DIMINISHING THEIR HOSTILITY TO GOP.

5. I WOULD POINT OUT TO THE PRESIDENT THAT ANY U.S.
ASSISTANCE MUST BE PART OF A COHERENT GOP PROGRAM WHICH
OFFERS SOME HOPE FOR REASONABLY EFFICIENT INTEGRATION OF
THESE PEOPLE INTO PORTUGUESE SOCIETY.

6. IF THE PRESIDENT RESPONDS WITH A FIRM REQUEST FOR OUR
ASSISTANCE, I WOULD HOPE THAT WE COULD IMMEDIATELY BEGIN

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MOVING REFUGEES FROM ANGOLA. I WOULD ALSO WANT THE
IMMEDIATE VISIT TO LISBON OF A DISASTER RELIEF SPECIALIST
EXPERIENCED IN REFUGEE PROGRAMS WHO COULD REVIEW THE GOP
PROGRAM AND RECOMMEND THE MOST EFFECTIVE FORM OF U.S.
PARTICIPATION.

7. I SEE THIS ENTIRE EFFORT FITTING WITHIN THE GUIDELINES
FOR DISASTER RELIEF WITH FUNDING FROM APPROPRIATIONS
MADE AVAILABLE FOR THESE PURPOSES. REQUEST IMMEDIATE
DEPARTMENT APPROVAL OF APPROACH AND ANY ADDITIONAL

INSTRUCTIONS OR SUGGESTIONS PRIOR TO COB WEDNESDAY
WASHINGTON TIME.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REFUGEES, REFUGEE RELIEF, REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT, AIR TRANSPORTATION, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 19 AUG 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: SmithRJ
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975LISBON04711
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X3
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750286-0411
From: LISBON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750840/aaaabjak.tel
Line Count: 118
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: SmithRJ
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 17 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <17 JUN 2003 by WorrelSW>; APPROVED <09 DEC 2003 by SmithRJ>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: U.S. ASSISTANCE FOR ANGOLAN RELIEF
TAGS: SREF, PFOR, PO, US, AO, (COSTA GOMES, FRANCISCO DA)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006